

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-12

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ISO-00 NEAE-00 SY-10 OPR-02 CIAE-00

DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04

RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20 USIA-15 ACDA-19 IO-14

DRC-01 AID-20 OMB-01 /182 W

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P R 031210Z DEC 73

FM AMCONSUL KARACHI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7691

INFO AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY KABUL

AMCONSUL LAHORE

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

AMCONSUL PESHAWAR

C O N D I T I O N A L SECTION 1 OF 2 KARACHI 2489

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, PINT, PK

SUBJECT: BALUCHISTAN: ASSASSINATION OF MPA ABDUS

SAMAD KHAN ACHAKZAI, LEADER OF PUSHTUNKHAWA NAP

BEGIN SUMMARY: DECEMBER 2 ASSASSINATION OF KHAN

ABDUS SAMAD ACHAKZAI, LONG-TIME BALUCHISTAN POLITICAL FIGURE, CAME AS UNEXPECTED DEVELOPMENT IN CONTENTIOUS, CONFUSED PATTERN OF BALUCHISTAN

POLITICS. ACHAKZAI HIMSELF

HAS BEEN OPERATING PRETTY MUCH AS A POLITICAL LONER, ALTHOUGH IDENTIFIED WITH PRIME MINISTER IN OPPOSITION TO BALUCHISTAN NAP ASPIRATIONS AND LEADERS. AT THIS POINT, NOTHING KNOWN OF ASSASSIN'S OR ASSASSINS' MOTIVATION, BUT SPECULATION RANGSJZFAKKAND WIDE AS TO WHAT FACTORS MAY BE INVOLVED -- LOCAL OR INTERNATIONAL POLITICS, CRASS ECONOMIC DEALINGS -- AND WHAT THE NEAR TERM IMPACT OF ACHAKZAI'S

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SLAYING MAY BE OMURESTIVE POLITICS OF BALUCHISTAN. EVENT

ADDS ANOTHER ELEMENT OF UNPREDICTABILITY TO COURSE OF EVENTS IN BALUCHISTAN AND WHILE IT MAY PRODUCE NO LASTING IMPACT ON SITUATION THERE ALSO POSSIBILITY THAT IT MAY IN-FLAME LEVEL OF CONTROVERSY AND VIOLENCE IN THE PROVINCE. END SUMMARY.

1. INTRODUCTION: KARACHI LOCAL PRESS OF DECEMBER 3 PROVIDED EXTENSIVE FRONT-PAGE COVERAGE TO QUETTA ACCOUNTS OF AN EARLY MORNING DECEMBER 2 HAND-HZNJIE ATTACK WHICH RESULTED IN DEATH OF ABDUS SAMAD KHAN ACHAKZAI, COLLABORATOR WITH ANTI-NAP GROUPS, LEADER OF PUSHTUNKHAWA NAP, AND ELECTED MEMBER OF THE BALUCHISTAN PROVINCIAL ASSEMBLY. THUS FAR, PCTSS ACCOUNTS HAVE CAREFULLY AVOIDED ANY SPECULATION AS TO THE IDENTITY AND MBJIVATIONS OF JBSASSINS. PUOAA LISHED CONDOLENCES FROM NATIONAL AND PROVINCIAL FIGURES, INCLUDING THE PRIME MINISTER AND PRESIDENT, ALL HIGHLY LAUDATORY OF KHAN'S ROLE AT THE TIME OF PAKISTAN'S INDEPZH- RURNCE. BALUCHISTAN GOVERNOR BUGTI HAS CALLED FOR TWO DAYS MOURNING AND DECEMBER 3 HAS BEEN DECLARED A PUBLIC HOLL- DAY. REPORTS INDICATE THAT THERE WERE INCIDENTS OF UNRULI- NESS IN QUETTA SUNDAY, INCLUDING THWARTED DEMONSTRATION AT IRANIAN CONSULATE GENERAL FOLLOWING WORD OF ACHAKZAI'S DEATH, BUT REPORTEDLY THESE DEMONSTRATIONS WERE BROUGHT UNDER CONTROL. ACHAKZAI'S BODY HAS BEEN TAKEN TO HIS HOME IN GULISTAN IN PISHIN TESHIL OF QUETTA DISTRICT WHERE HE TO BE BURIED AFTERNOON OF DECEMBER 3. UNCOMMENTED ON IS THE HIGH INTEREST REGARDING IMPACT ACHAKZAI'S SLAYING MAY HAVE ON THE CHRONICALLY DIS- TURBED POLITICAL SITUATION IN BALUCHISTAN.

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INFO AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY KABUL
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2. ACHAKZAI'S CURRENT POLITICAL ROLE: ACHAKZAI HAS BEEN ACTIVE IN HIS OPPOSITION TO THE BALUCHISTAN NAP SINCE HIS SPLIT WITH THAT PARTY IN JULY 1970 IN A DISPUTE OVER THE REINTEGRATION OF THE PATHAN-SPEAKING AREAS OF BALUCHISTAN INTO THE NWFP, WHICH ACHAKZAI AS A PATHAN FAVORED, BUT THE BALUCH NAP OPPOSED. KHAN'S ELECTION AS AN MPA ON THE TICKET OF HIS OWN PARTY, THE PUSHTUNKHAWA NAP, IN DECEMBER 1970 WAS NOT CONCLUSIVE DEMONSTRATION OF BROAD-BASED POLITICAL STRENGTH AMONG PROVINCE'S PATHANS BECAUSE OF THE GREATER ELECTORAL VICTORY OF THE RIVAL JUI(H), WHICH WON THREE PROVINCIAL SEATS IN THE PROVINCE'S PATHAN SPEAKING AREAS. OF LATE HIS POLITICAL PROSPECTS HAVE DECLINED FURTHER AND HIS RELATIONS WITH OTHER ANTI-NAP ELEMENTS HAVE SOURED AND BECOME ATTENUATED BECAUSE OF HIS CONSTANT MANEUVERING FOR A MINISTERIAL PORTFOLIO FOR HIMSELF AND ATTEMPTS MAXIMIZE HIS LEVERAGE BY HIGHLIGHTING HIS DEDICATION TO PATHAN INTERESTS. AMONG MANY INHABITANTS OF BALUCHISTAN

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ACHAKZAI HAS A REPUTATION OF BEING VENAL AND ACQUISITIVE, NOT AN UNUSUAL ACCUSATION, BUT OFTEN VOICED WITH ENVY BECAUSE HE BELIEVED TO BE QUITE SUCCESSFUL IN ADDING TO HIS PERSONAL RESOURCES BECAUSE OF HIS POLITICAL POSITION AND MANEUVERING. HE DEFINITELY WAS NOT AN ANTI-BHUTTO FIGURE; IF ANYTHING, HE WAS A COOPERATIVE AGENT OF THE PRIME MINISTER IN SEEKING TO CUT DOWN NAP AND ENHANCE HIS OWN POSITION IN PROVINCE THROUGH BENEFICES OF HIS LINK WITH PRIME MINISTER. AMONG PATHANS OF BALUCHISTAN, DESPITE OCCASIONAL REFERENCE TO HIM AS THE GANDHI OF BALUCHISTAN AND HIS MUCH EARLIER IDENTIFICATION WITH ABDUL GHAFFAR KHAN (WITH WHOM HIS RELATIONS OF LATE HAVE BEEN UNSATISFACTORY), ACHAKZAI'S STOCK DECLINED FOLLOWING THE ELECTIONS, AS DID THE PUBLIC IMAGE OF THE TWO PATHAN JUI(H) MPA'S WHO RODE IN ON RELIGION AND POPULISM, BUT LEFT THEIR ALIGNMENT WITH THE NAP TO TAKE MINISTERIAL POST IN JAM SAHIB'S GOVERNMENT IN ORDER TO LINE THEIR POCKETS. IT REMAINS TO BE SEEN WHAT, IF ANY, LASTING IMPACT ACHAKZAI'S ASSASSINATION WILL HAVE ON THE PATHANS OF BALUCHISTAN WHO HAVE BEEN QUIESCENT DURING RECENT DIFFICULTIES AND WHOSE AREA HAS BEEN FREE OF THE

VIOLENCE WHICH HAS TAKEN PLACE IN THE BALUCH AREAS. ANY IMPACT, OF COURSE, WILL IN A LARGE MEASURE DEPEND NOT ONLY ON PERCEPTIONS AND JUDGMENTS OF PATHANS THEMSELVES, BUT ALSO ON THE PRESENCE OR ABSENCE OF EXTERNAL MANIPULATION OF SITUATION, AND ALSO ON HOW INCIDENT IS PORTRAYED BY OFFICIALLY CONTROLLED MEDIA.

3. POSSIBLE MOTIVATIONS: AT THIS POINT, IT IS ONLY POSSIBLE TO SPECULATE ON MOTIVATION OF THE UNKNOWN, YET TO BE APPREHENDED ASSASSINS. SOME IDEAS WHICH COME TO MIND FOLLOW BUT ARE NOT RPT. NOT SET OUT IN ANY PARTICULAR ORDER OF PRIORITY OR CERTITUDE. ACHAKZAI COULD HAVE BEEN DONE IN BECAUSE OF SOME ECONOMIC INVOLVEMENT, EITHER LICIT OR ILLICIT. HIS DEATH COULD HAVE BEEN ENGINEERED BY GOP IN HOPE OF POLARIZING AND PERHAPS ENERGIZING THE PATHANS OF THE PROVINCE AGAINST THE BALUCH IN SUPPORT OF ITS EFFORTS TO ERADICATE BALUCH DISSIDENCE. ANTI-NAP POLITICAL INTERESTS WHICH ACHAKZAI HAS COOPERATED WITH ON AND OFF MAY HAVE BEEN ALIENATED BY HIS RECENT NON-COOPERATIVE AND SELF-SEEKING MANEUVERING. IT IS REPORTED THAT ACHAKZAI HAD LEANED PUBLICLY ON THE PRIME MINISTER TO EXACT FROM CHIEF

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MINISTER PROMISE OF MINISTERIAL POST FOR HIMSELF. IT IS DIFFICULT TO ACCEPT THAT BALUCH OF PROVINCE WOULD IN ANY WAY INVOLVE THEMSELVES IN SUCH AN ACTION SINCE ACHAKZAI POSED NO SERIOUS POLITICAL THREAT TO THEM. FOR THE NAP TO DO AWAY WITH ACHAKZAI WOULD PRODUCE NO APPARENT GAIN FOR THEM AND INVOLVE PROSPECT OF A SERIOUS LOSS IF RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE DEATH COULD BE LAID AT THEIR DOORSTEP. FURTHER AFIELD, BUT PERHAPS GERMANE BECAUSE OF THE CURRENT SITUATION, IS THE POSSIBILITY THAT THIS COULD BE AN AFGHAN PROVOCATION. IN THE COMING DAYS IT LIKELY THAT THESE SUCH AS THE PRECEEDING WILL SURFACE AS WELL AS OTHERS, BUT IT IS HIGHLY LIKELY, DESPITE THE ORDERING OF A JUDICIAL INQUIRY BY GOVERNOR BUGTI, THAT THE REAL CIRCUMSTANCES SURROUNDING THE ASSASSINATION OF ACHAKZAI MAY NEVER BECOME PUBLIC, AND IT WILL BECOME YET ANOTHER UNEXPLAINED FOOTNOTE IN PAKISTAN'S POLITICAL HISTORY.

4. POSSIBLE IMPACT OF ACHAKZAI'S SLAYING: THIS EVENT COULD FURTHER DISTURB THE UNSETTLED POLITICS OF BALUCHISTAN IF IT IS FOLLOWED BY SERIOUS DISTURBANCES BY PATHAN ELEMENTS OF PROVINCE. HOWEVER, IF HANDLED ASTUTELY BY THE GOVERNMENT, IT COULD PASS WITHOUT SERIOUS CONSEQUENCE SINCE IT UNLIKELY THAT THE PATHANS WITHOUT INSTIGATION ARE REALLY THAT GRIEVED OVER ACHAKZAI'S PASSING AND THE ALUCH NAP PROBABLY NOT WILLING PUSH ANY HARDER BECAUSE OF ACHAKZAI'S DEATH. BUT NAP MAY SEEK SOME SYMBOLIC USE OF HIS ASSASSINATION IF IT CAN BE CONSTRUED AS AN EXAMPLE OF REGIME'S

POLITICAL OPPRESSION AND PERfidY. UNLESS ACHAKZAI'S SUPPORT AMONG PATHANS MUCH WIDER AND STRONGER THAN GENERALLY BELIEVED, SOME EXTERNAL LINKAGE BECOMES OPERATIVE, OR SITUATION MANIPULATED BY OTHERS FOR THEIR OWN PURPOSES, ACHAKZAI'S DEATH IN AND OF ITSELF, WHILE NOTEWORTHY SHOULD NOT BECOME AN INCIDENT OF HISTORIC SIGNIFICANCE. NONETHELESS, SINCE BHUTTO APPARENTLY DESIROUS OF PROLONGATION OF DISTURBED SITUATION IN PROVINCE AS BEST AMBIANCE IN WHICH TO DEAL WITH NAP AND BUGTI ALSO BELIEVED TO CONSIDER THAT DISTURBED CONDITIONS IN PROVINCE SERVE TO KEEP HIM IN HIS CURRENT POSITION, PREDICTION AS TO WHAT DIRECTION SITUATION FOLLOWING ACHAKZAI'S DEATH WILL TAKE DIFFICULT TO MAKE AT THIS POINT.

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